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OCT 13 2006

Docket No. 740756-2670

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**REMARKS**

The Official Action dated July 13, 2006 has been received and its contents carefully noted. The Examiner is thanked for reviewing this application

Claims 1, 3, 8, 10, 18, 20, 27, 29, 36 and 38 were pending prior to this Amendment. Claims 2, 4-7, 9, 11-17, 19, 21-26, 28, 30-35, 37 and 39-44 have been withdrawn from consideration. By this Amendment, claims 8 and 10 have been canceled. In the instant application, claims 1, 3, 8, 10, 18, 20, 27, 29, 36 and 38 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Ichijo et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,821,828 – hereafter Ichijo).

In the detailed Office Action, claims 1, 3, 8, 10, 18, 20, 27, 29, 36 and 38 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Ichijo et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,821,828 – hereafter Ichijo).

Initially, claims 18 and 20 rejected by the Examiner as reciting "... dry etching using hydrazine ...". However, Applicants respectfully note that claims 18 and 20 have been amended to change from "dry" etching to "wet" etching in the amendment of September 6, 2005. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to clarify the rejection for the record.

In response to the anticipatory rejection, Applicants have amended claims 1 and 3 to recite forming a second amorphous semiconductor film over the first crystalline semiconductor film by sputtering.

Additionally, Applicants have canceled claims 8 and 10 without any prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter disclosed therein. A feature, namely "by sputtering", of claims 8 and 10 have been incorporated into claims 1 and 3, as shown above.

In the rejection, the Examiner alleged that this feature of claims 8 and 10, i.e., "the second amorphous semiconductor film is formed by sputtering" is disclosed in col. 8, line 65 of Ichijo. However, Applicants respectfully submit that the cited text of Ichijo appears to describe "a first semiconductor film 12 having an amorphous structure is formed on the base insulating film". Note that col. 8, lines 59-60 in the same paragraph as the line 65 in Ichijo.

Further, in Ichijo, the first semiconductor film 12 appears to be crystallized and used as an active layer of a TFT (see, e.g., col. 9, lines 14-17 and Fig. 1 etc. in Ichijo). Therefore, Applicants respectfully assert that the first semiconductor film 12 of Ichijo is different from the second amorphous semiconductor film serving as a gettering sink as recited in

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Applicants' claimed invention, and that Ichijo fails to disclose "forming a second amorphous semiconductor film over the first crystalline semiconductor film by sputtering".

Moreover, the presently claimed invention has a feature wherein the second amorphous semiconductor film is formed by sputtering, which can control impurity concentrations according to the present invention (e.g., line 10-17 of page 5 in the specification). By the sputtering method, the second amorphous semiconductor film serving as a gettering sink contains at a concentration of  $1 \times 10^{18}$  atoms/cm<sup>3</sup> or lower, oxygen at a concentration of  $8 \times 10^{19}$  atoms/cm<sup>3</sup> or lower, and noble gas at a concentration of  $1 \times 10^{20}$  atoms/cm<sup>3</sup> or higher, as recited in Applicants' pending claims. These concentrations advantageously allow the second amorphous semiconductor film to have a desired gettering function (as disclosed in, e.g., lines 5-13 on page 3 of the specification) and to be removed without residue (as disclosed in, e.g., lines 8-18 of page 36 of the specification).

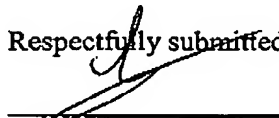
Consequently, since each and every feature of the present claims is not taught (and is not inherent) in the teachings of Ichijo, as is required by MPEP Chapter 2131 in order to establish anticipation, the rejection of claims 1, 3, 18, 20, 27, 29, 36 and 38, under 35 U.S.C. §102(e), as anticipated by Ichijo is improper.

Applicants note that claim 18 has been amended, as shown above, to correct a typographical error.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of record be reconsidered and withdrawn by the Examiner, and that the application be passed to issue.

While the present application is now believed to be in condition for allowance, should the Examiner find some issue to remain unresolved, or should any new issues arise, which could be eliminated through discussions with Applicant's representative, then the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone in order that the further prosecution of this application can thereby be expedited.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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